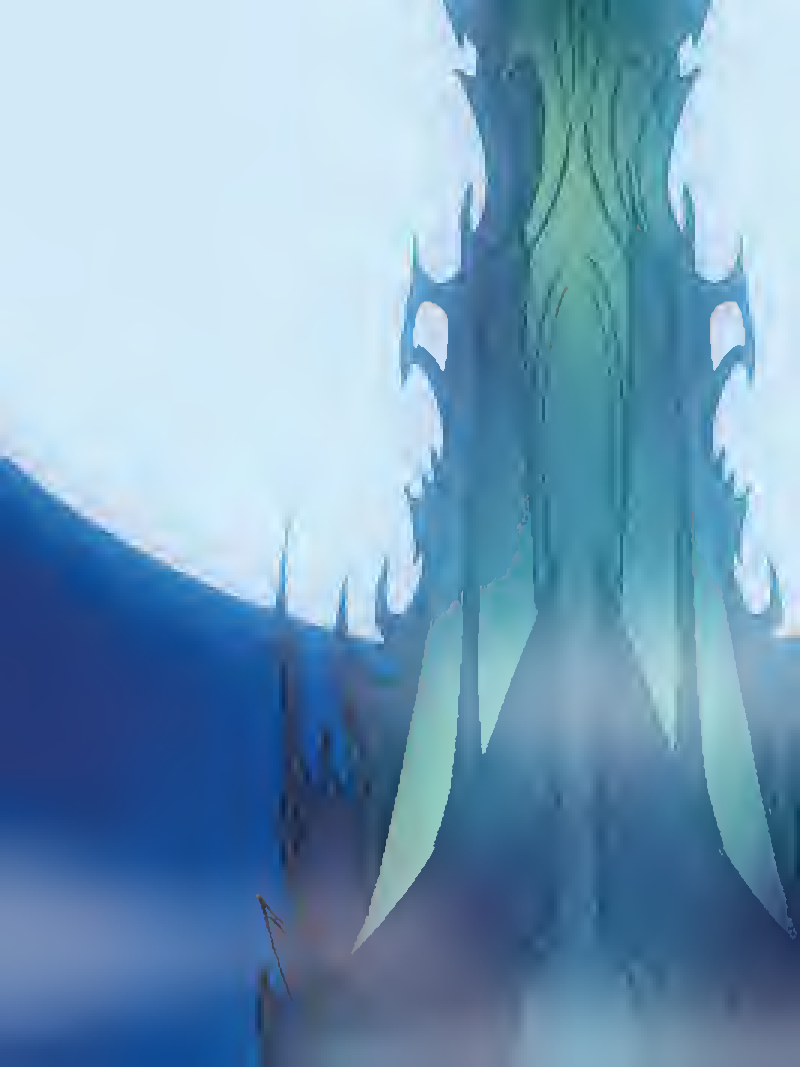
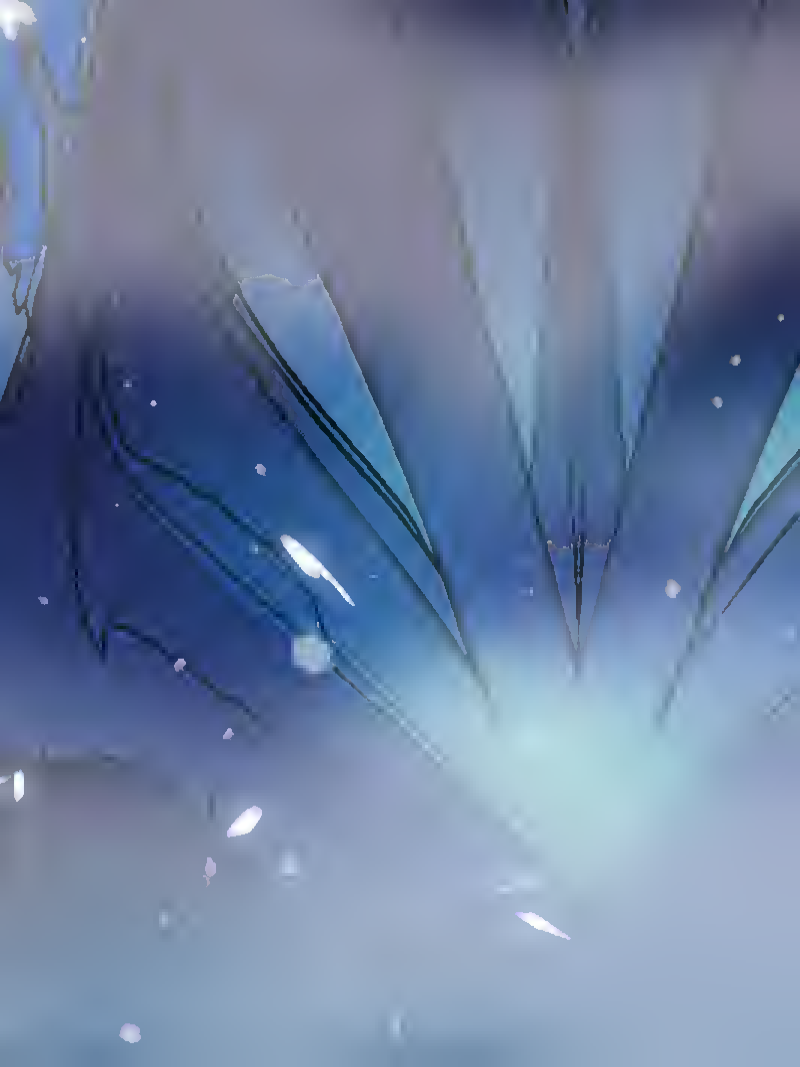
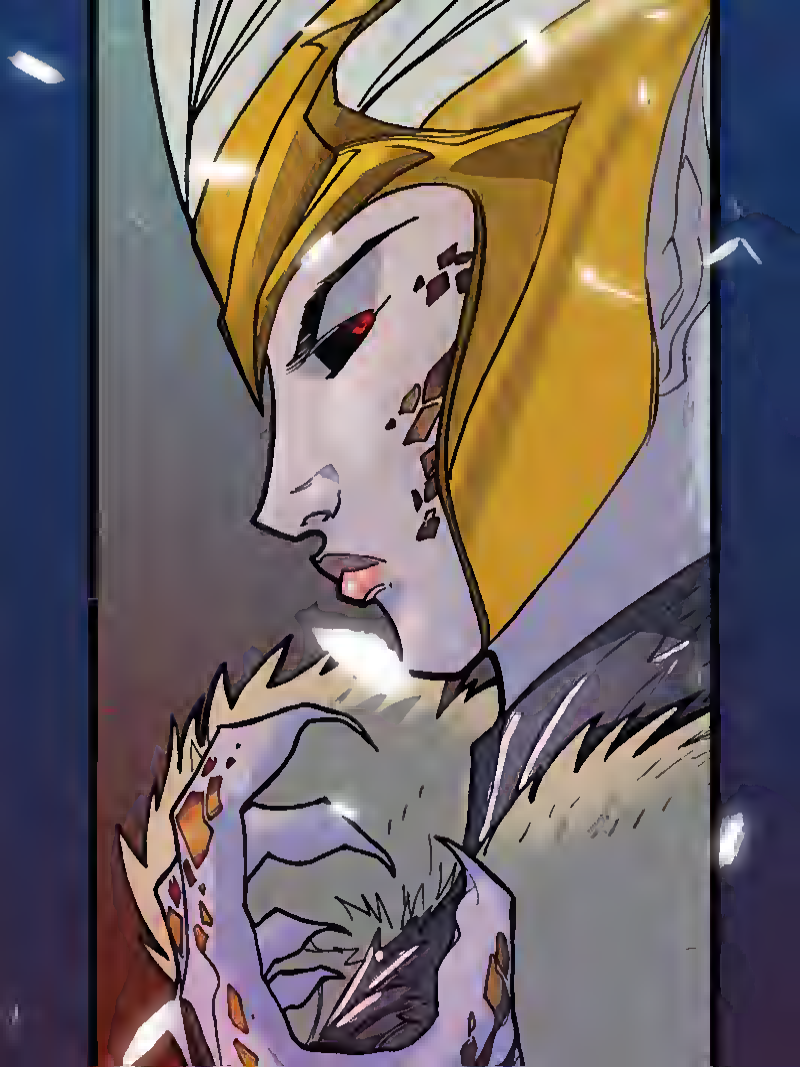
KARTANITH.
CAPITAL CITY OF MIRROR.





KOLIN, DO YOU BRING ME GIFTS?



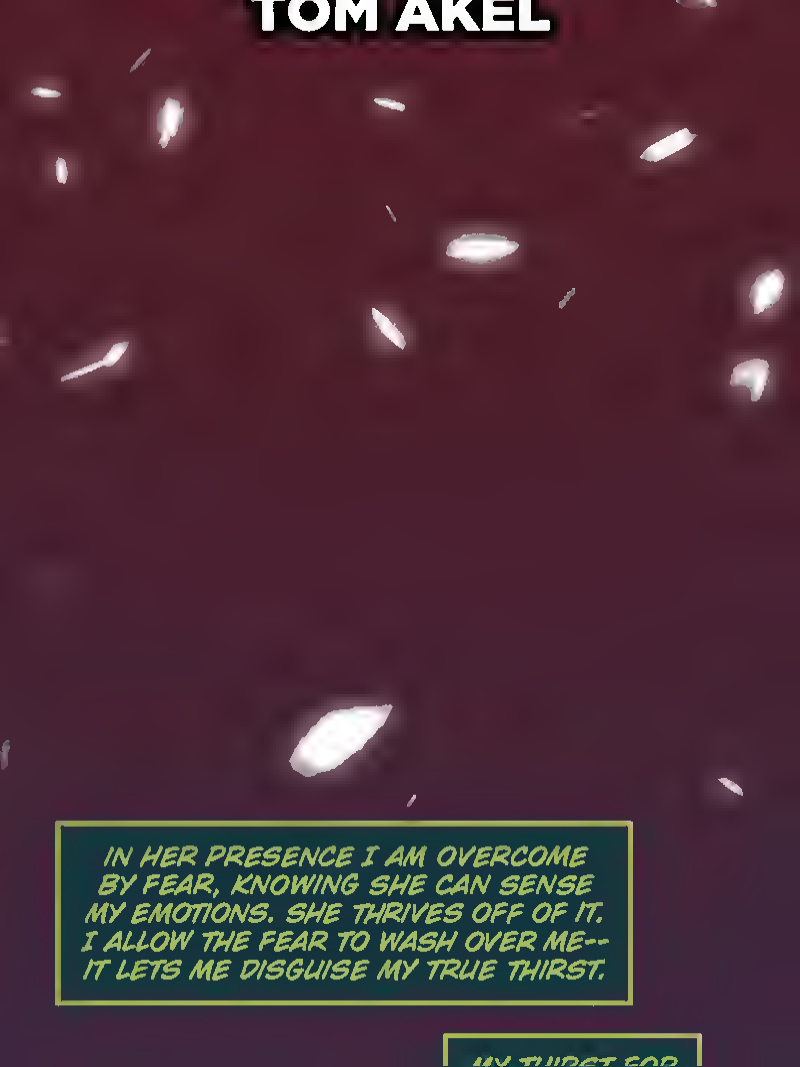
CHAPTER 5

WRITER/ARTIST/CREATOR
KARL ALTSTAETTER

COLORS
KOMIKAKI STUDIO
FEATURING KEVIN LIEW

LETTERS
TAYLOR ESPOSITO

EDITOR

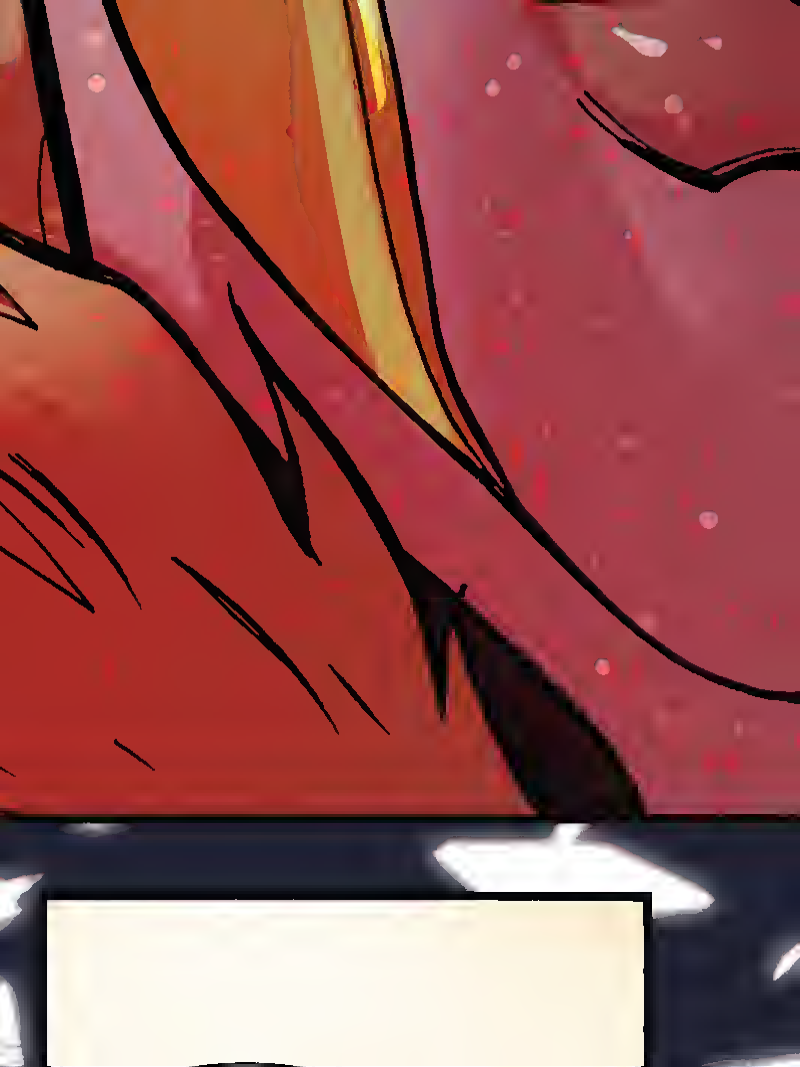

TOM AKEL
IN HER PRESENCE I AM OVERCOME BY FEAR, KNOWING SHE CAN SENSE MY EMOTIONS. SHE THRIVES OFF OF IT. I ALLOW THE FEAR TO WASH OVER ME-- IT LETS ME DISGUISE MY TRUE THIRST.

MY THIRST FOR REVENGE.
MY QUEEN, THERE WERE... COMPLICATIONS.
I CAN SEE BY YOUR FACE THAT YOU MET THE BLADE OF THE SHA DO KA WITCH D'CLO.

YES.
SHE PROVED DIFFICULT TO DEFEAT.

YOU WERE OUT-CLASSED, BOY. DID YOU BRING ME THE

FARGOTH MAGIC USER THAT WAS CAPTURED?



THEY SEEM TO KNOW WHERE THE MAGIC USERS ARE BEFORE WE DO. THEY ARE ALWAYS A STEP AHEAD OF US.

THEY ARE ALWAYS AHEAD OF YOU, KOLIN! A SIMPLE TASK YET YOU SEEM UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO COMPLETE IT. PERHAPS THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO MOTIVATE YOU.

MY BROTHER DID WHAT HE COULD BUT WAS CHEATED BY AN ELVARIAN OUTWORLDER WHO CONTROLS A DRAGON TOOTH. SHE HURT HIM...

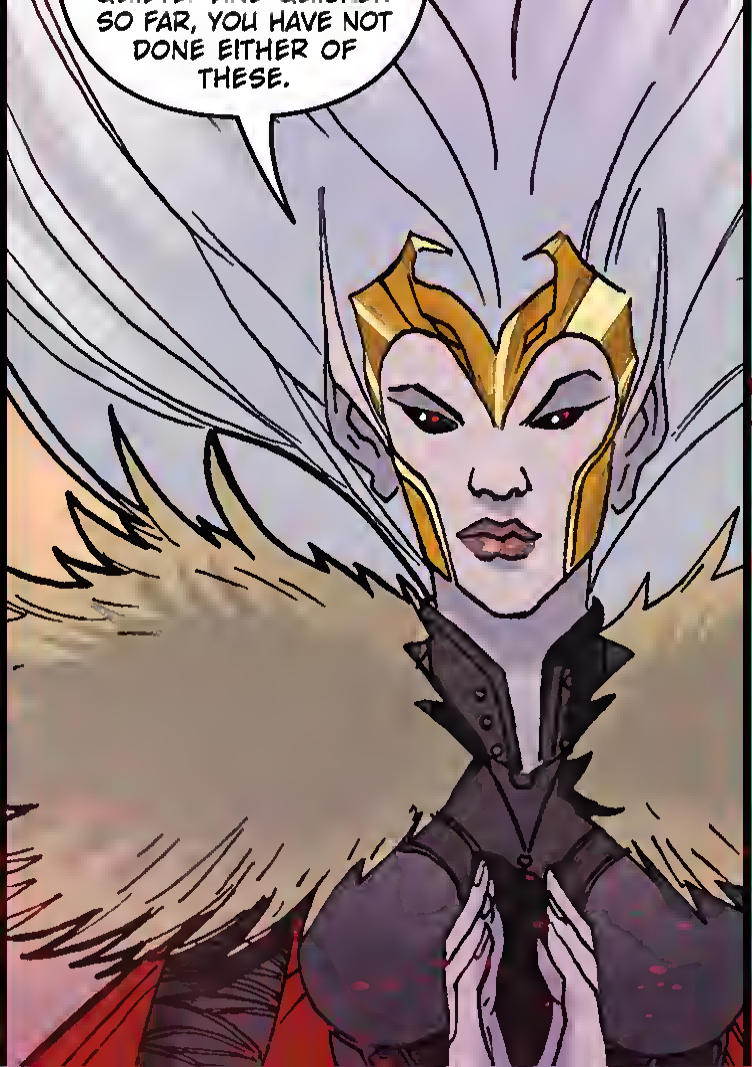
I WOULD HAVE RAN THEM DOWN LIKE DOGS IF I HAD NOT BEEN SUMMONED BACK TO THE CAPITAL.

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW. I WILL OPEN YOUR MIND, AND THEN IMPART MY WISDOM TO SHOW YOU THE PATH FORWARD.

LIKE MY FATHER I MUST FOREVER BE THE DIPLOMAT. PLAY THE GAME 'TILL I CAN FIND A WAY TO WIN--THE ROLE OF

THE LOYAL SERVANT. AND WHEN I FIND HER WEAKNESS I WILL EXPLOIT IT IN THE FORM OF A KNIFE TO HER PRETTY THROAT.

YOU WILL PICK UP THEIR TRAIL IN THE OUTLANDS, FIND THEM, AND BRING THEM TO ME ALIVE. THERE ARE FORCES AT PLAY THAT NEED THIS HANDLED QUIETLY AND QUICKLY.

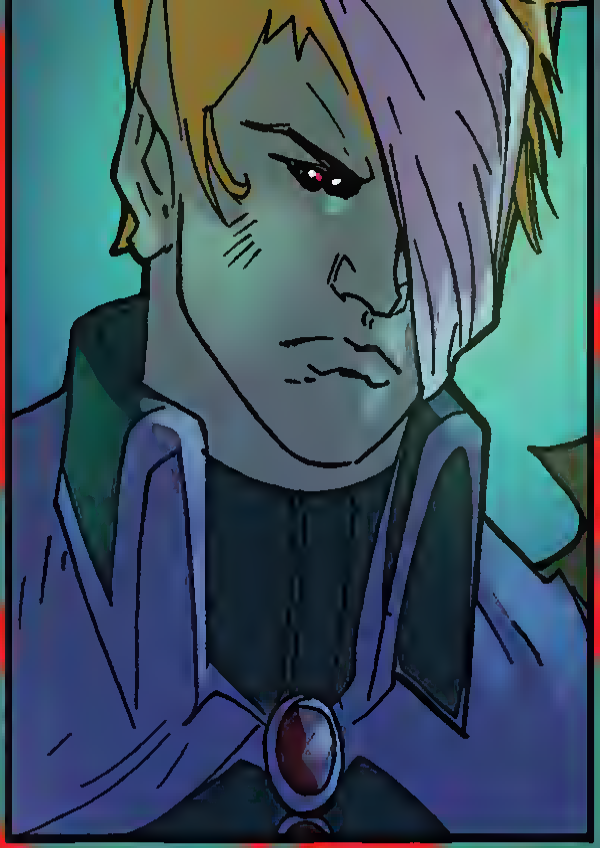

SO FAR, YOU HAVE NOT DONE EITHER OF THESE.

KEEDD AND MY PERSONAL GUARDS WILL ACCOMPANY YOU TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE.

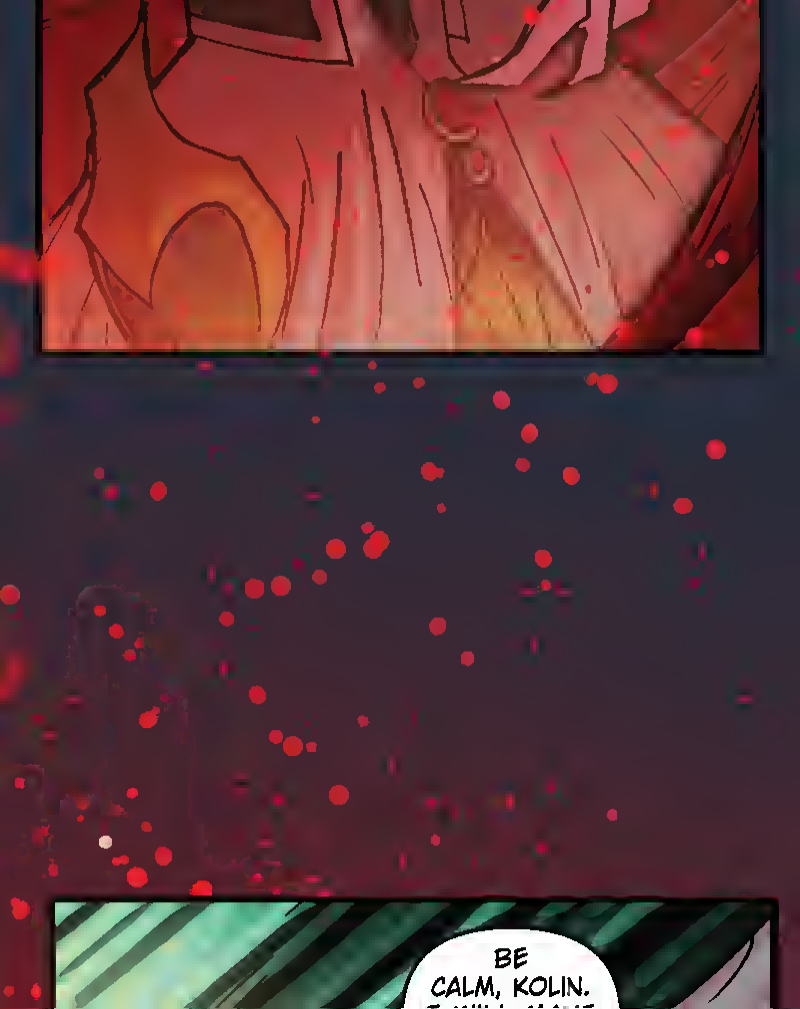
MY QUEEN, I CAN DO THIS ON MY OWN! KEEDD IS AN ANIMAL!

MY DEAR, DEAR BOY. YOUR FAMILY OWES THIS HOUSE MANY THINGS AND YOUR LIFE IS MINE TO KEEP OR DESTROY. YOU WILL DO AS I SAY.

YES, OF COURSE.



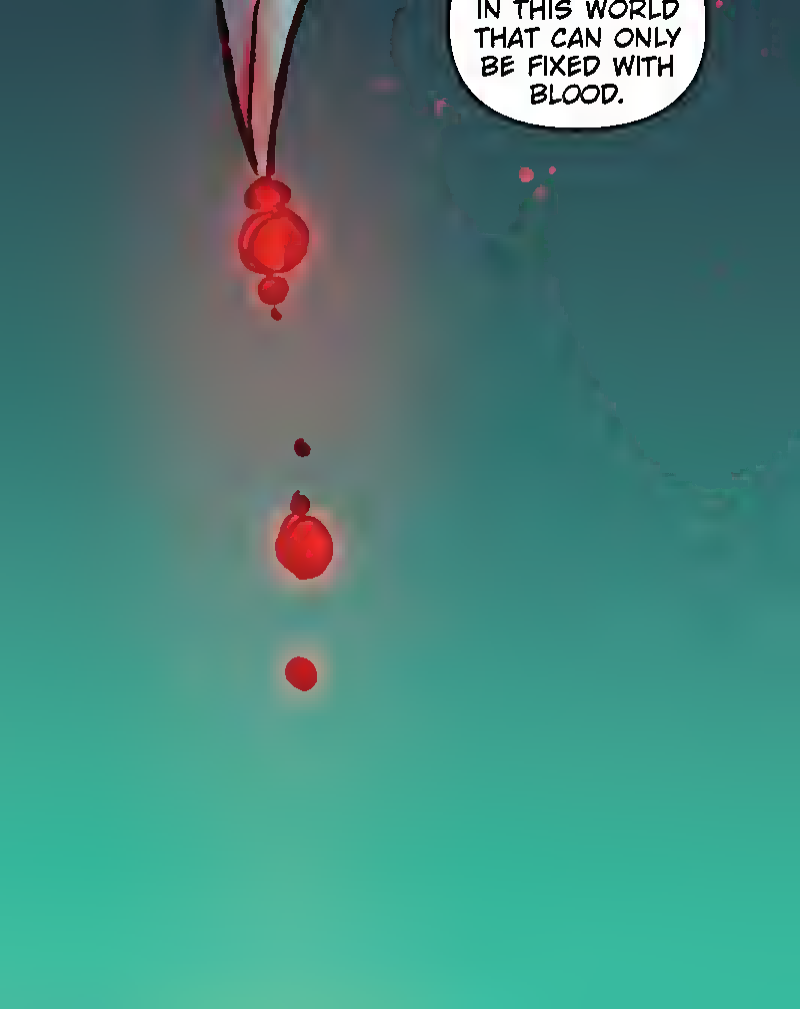
REALITY FADES INTO HALF REMEMBERED DREAMS. MEMORIES FLOW THROUGH MY MIND. I BURY MY TRUE FEELINGS DEEP WHERE I PRAY SHE WON'T FIND THEM. HER HANDS TOUCH MY FACE AND SHE PROJECTS HERSELF INTO MY SUBCONSCIOUS. A CALM FALLS OVER ME. I FEEL LIKE A CHILD, HELD SAFELY IN ITS MOTHER'S ARMS.

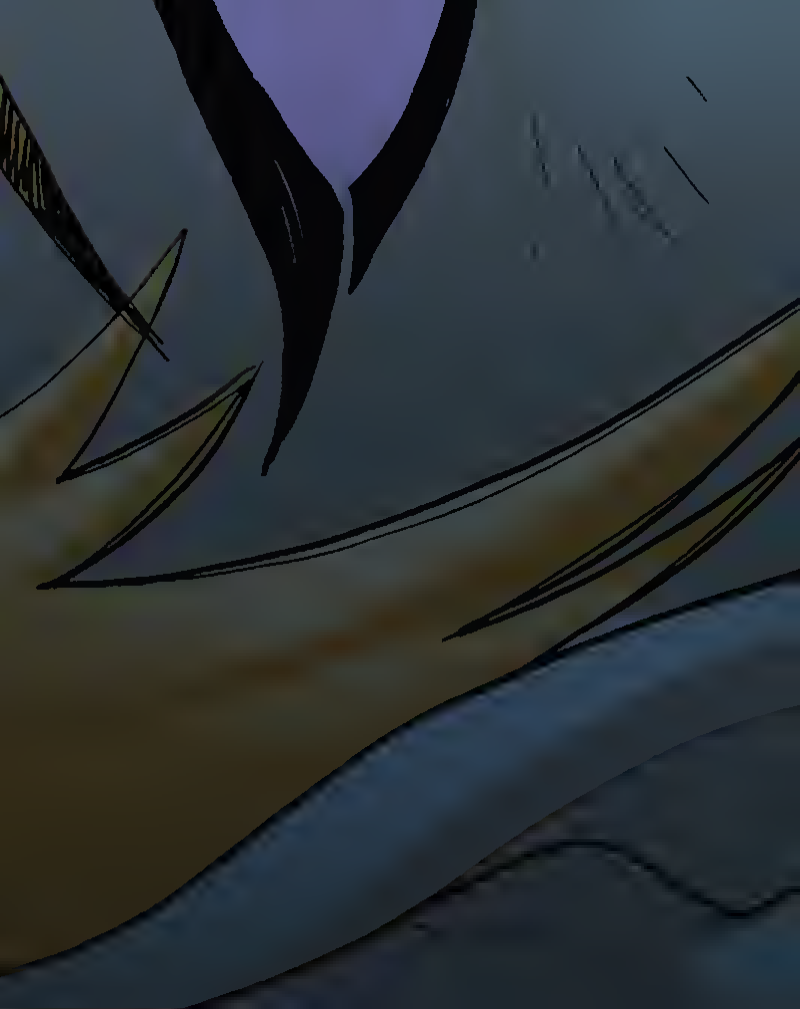

BE
CALM, KOLIN.

I WILL MAKE YOU WHOLE AGAIN.

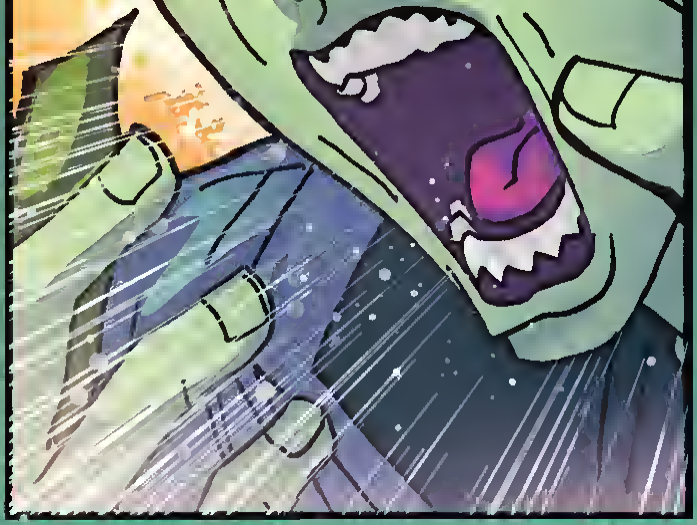
SHE CONTROLS ME.

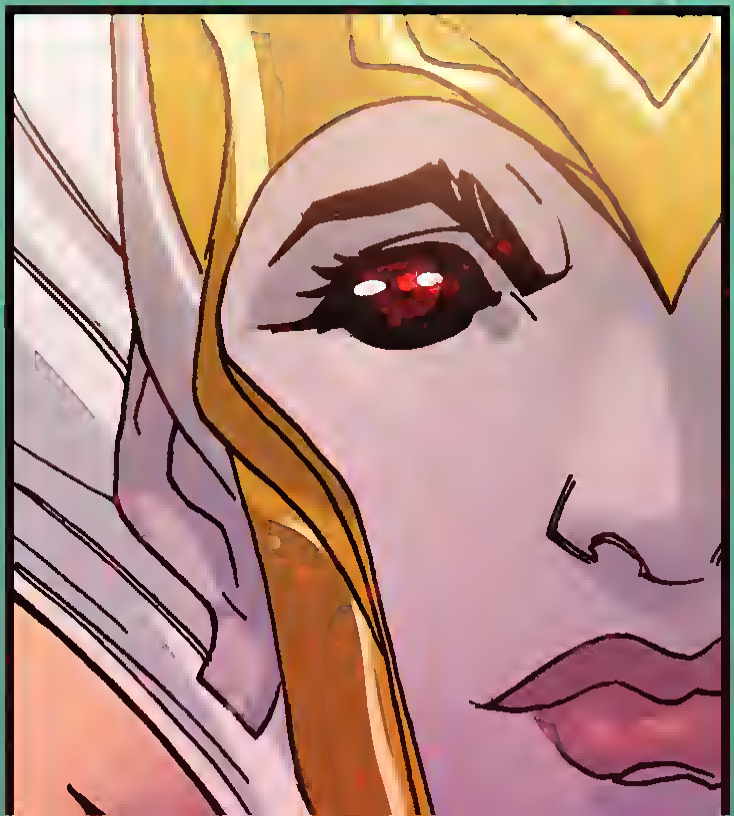
THERE ARE THINGS


IN THIS WORLD
THAT CAN ONLY
BE FIXED WITH
BLOOD.



ARGH!



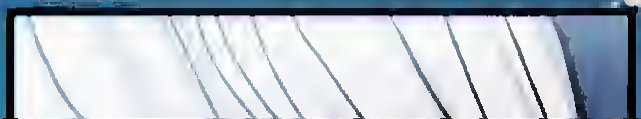


KOLIN,
LADY MARTIKA
IS A POWERFUL
ADVOCATE AND ALLY
OF YOURS. SHE'LL
REMAIN WITH ME TO
REMIND ME OF
YOUR...FINER
QUALITIES.

SAFE JOURNEY BROTHER. I...

MARTIKA IS THE ONLY PERSON LEFT IN THIS WORLD OR THE NEXT THAT I CARE ABOUT. SHE WILL NOT TAKE HER AWAY FROM ME.

I WILL RETURN SISTER. I WILL MAKE YOU PROUD.

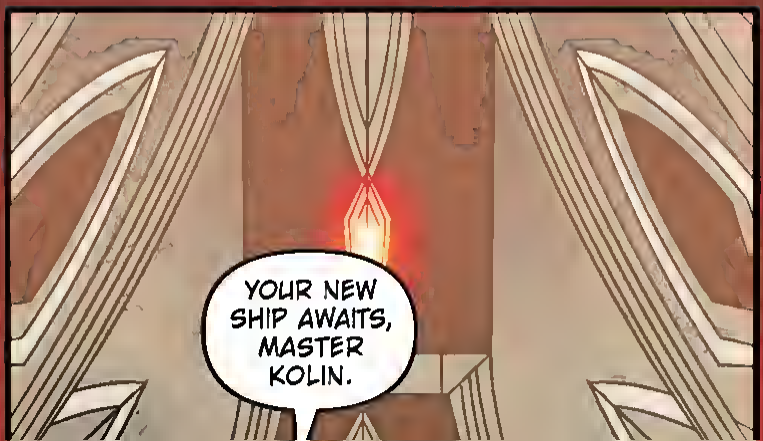


SO TOUCHING. HURRY BACK, DEAR KOLIN.

MY FATHER WAS RIGHT WHEN HE SAID "WE ARE ALL HEROES OF OUR OWN STORY." IT'S CLEAR TO ME NOW WHAT HE MEANT BY THAT. WE BECOME THE HEROES OF OUR STORIES WHEN WE LIVE FOR SOMETHING BIGGER THAN OURSELVES. MAY FATHER LIVED AND DIED A HERO BECAUSE HE BELIEVED IN MIRROR BEING A PLACE FOR ALL.

I WAS SATISFIED LIVING IN FEAR. BEING THE EXTENSION OF AN EVIL CREATURE. CARRYING OUT HER COMMANDS THINKING IT WOULD SOME HOW GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF MY SISTER AND I. I REALIZE NOW THAT AS LONG AS THE QUEEN AND CREATURES LIKE D'CLO EXIST AT THE EXTREMES, MIRROR WILL NEVER KNOW SAFETY OR PEACE. I WILL NEVER KNOW PEACE.

LIKE THE QUEEN SAID, "THERE ARE THINGS IN THIS WORLD THAT CAN ONLY BE FIXED WITH BLOOD."


SHE'LL SOON LEARN HOW TRUE THOSE WORDS REALLY ARE.
YOUR NEW SHIP AWAITS, MASTER KOLIN.

YOUR SISTER WON'T BE

JOINING US?
HAHAHA!

YOU ARE GOING TO HELP ME FIND THE QUEEN'S "GIFTS." ONCE SHE IS SATISFIED I AM GOING TO RIP YOUR HALF-LIVING BODY APART AND DRINK YOUR BLOOD FROM YOUR EMPTY

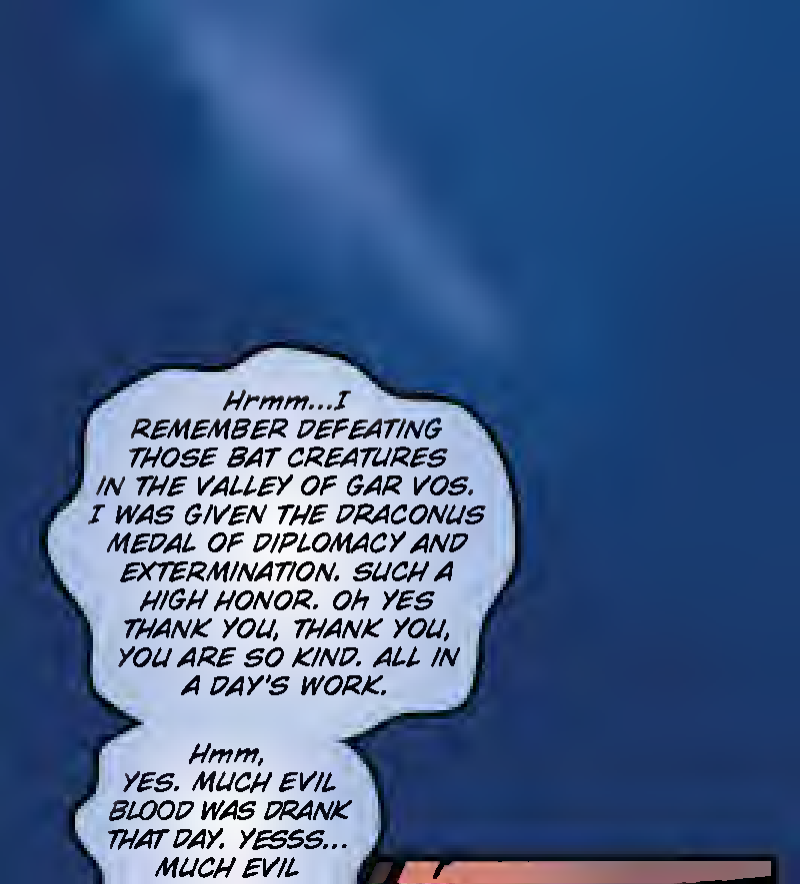
SKULL.

SHALL WE GO?

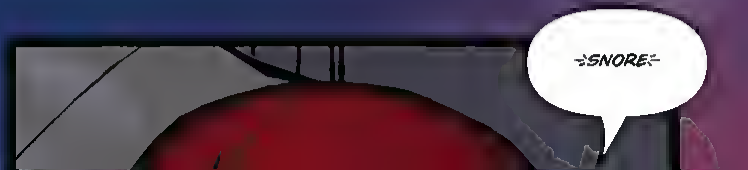
PROMISES, PROMISES.

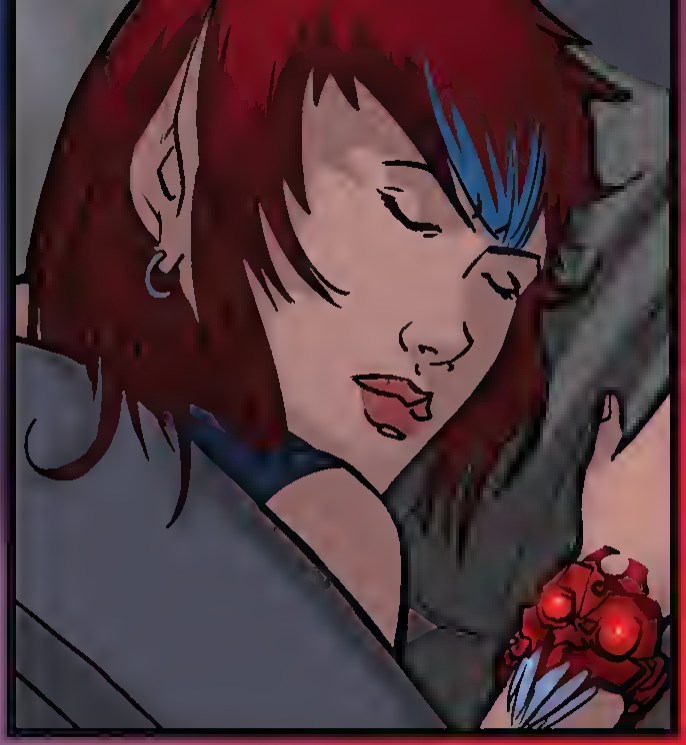
THE EDGE OF THE OUTLANDS

-SNORE-

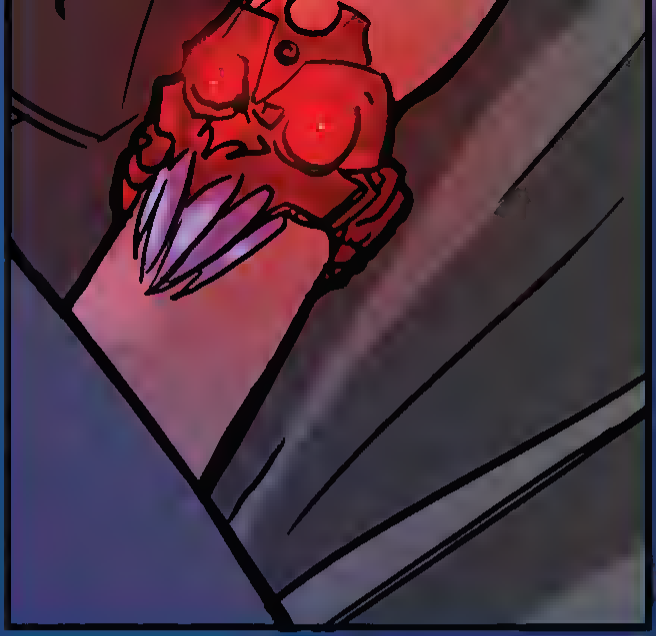

Hrmm...I REMEMBER DEFEATING THOSE BAT CREATURES IN THE VALLEY OF GAR VOS. I WAS GIVEN THE DRACONUS MEDAL OF DIPLOMACY AND EXTERMINATION. SUCH A HIGH HONOR. Oh YES THANK YOU, THANK YOU, YOU ARE SO KIND. ALL IN A DAY'S WORK.
Hmm, YES. MUCH EVIL BLOOD WAS DRANK THAT DAY. YESSS... MUCH EVIL

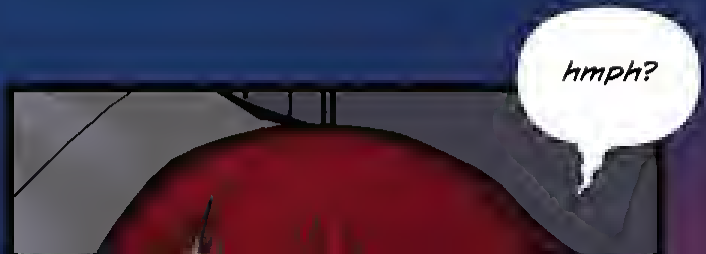
BLOOD.


~SNORE~



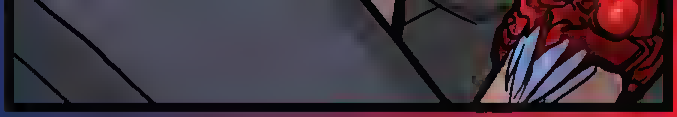
YES, THAT TIME I VISITED THE KINGDOM OF GREY GANS. THAT FOUR ARMED PRINCESS SUCH A SIGHT TO BEHOLD. YES, PLEASURE TO MEET YOU PRINCESS. PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A DRINK WITH ME...YES, YES YOU ARE SO WITTY. Oh, THANK YOU, I DESIGN MY OWN CLOTHES.

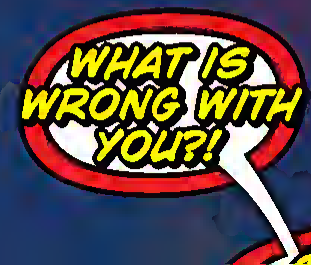



hmph?

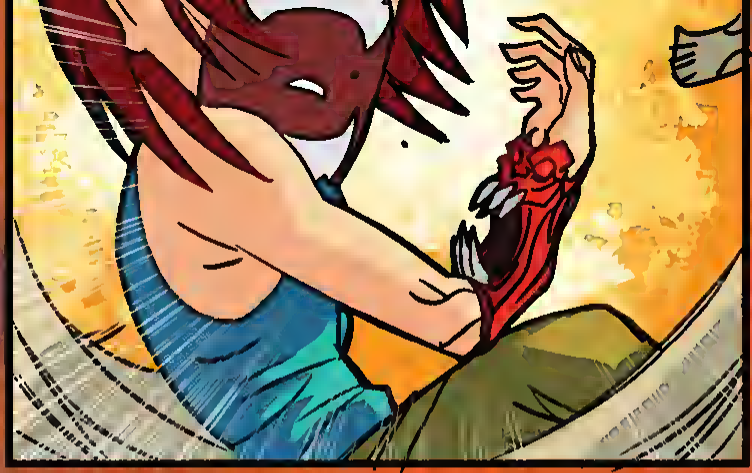
Ahh, YESSS... THAT TIME I FOUGHT OFF A HOARD OF FLUFFY YAN'NAS BEARS AT THE GATES OF THE LORD VOSS'S CITADEL. SO FLUFFY, BUT THE FUR GETS CAUGHT IN MY BACK TEE...

GRRRRRRR!



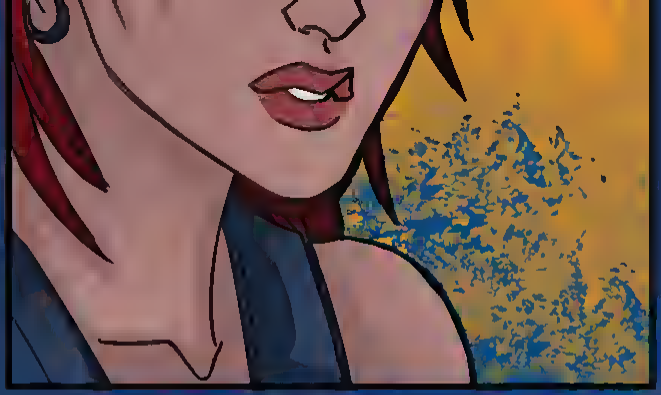

WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?!

CAN'T YOU TELL I'M TRYING TO SLEEP?!
NOW BE QUIET OR I'LL TURN YOU OFF AND YOU CAN STAY THAT WAY FOREVER!



I AM SORRY, oh HATED MISTRESS. I AM TRAPPED IN THIS FORM. NEVER KNOWING WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE FREE. I AM ONLY USED TO CAUSE PAIN AND CREATE MAYHEM. CURSED WITH A THIRST FOR BLOOD. WHERE IS MY REST?

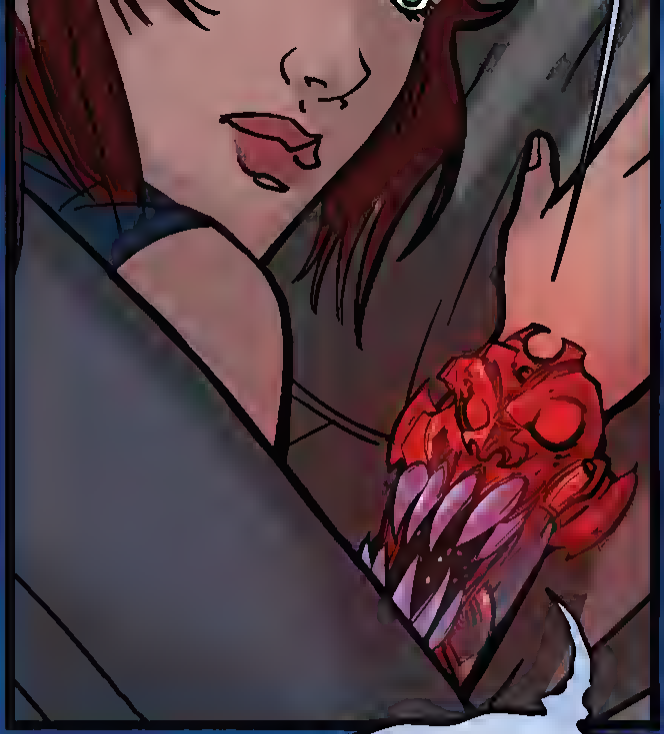
OKAY, OKAY. ENOUGH WITH THE SOB STORY. TELL ME ONE STORY AND THEN LET ME GO TO SLEEP.

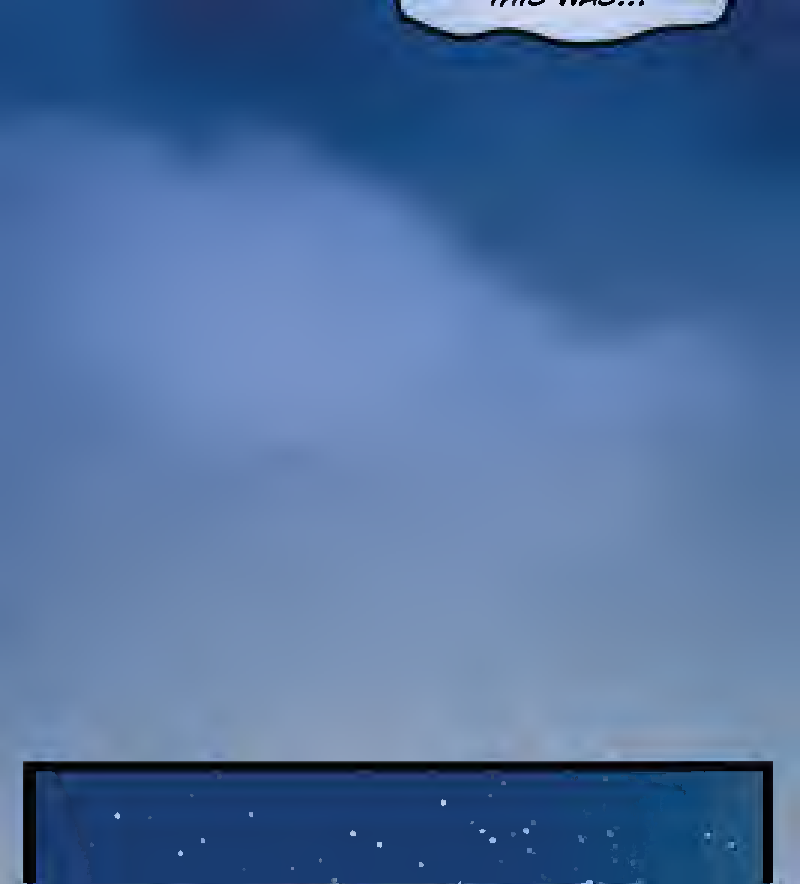


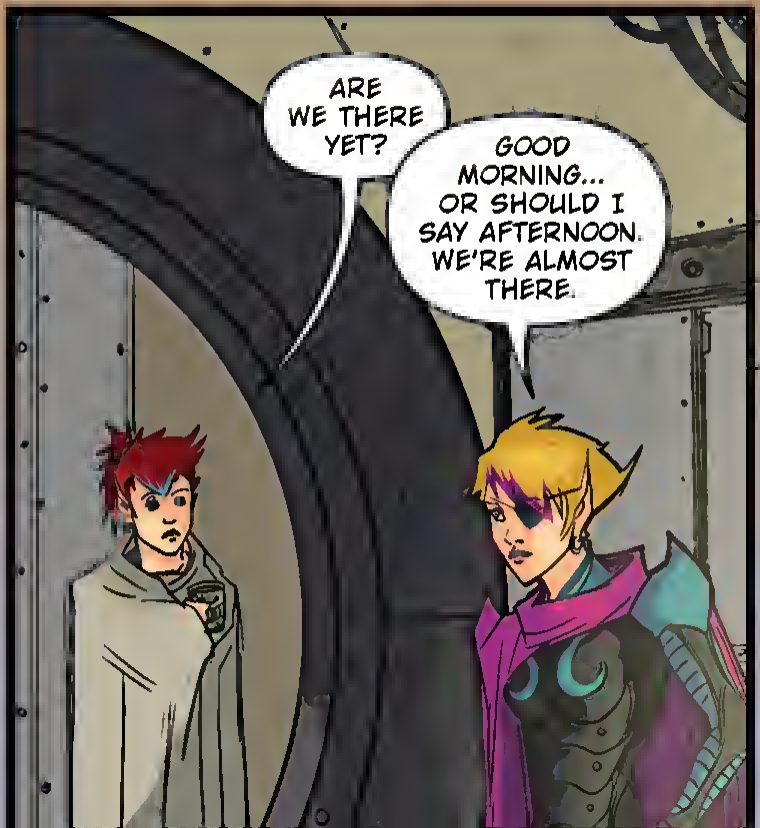
EXCELLENT!

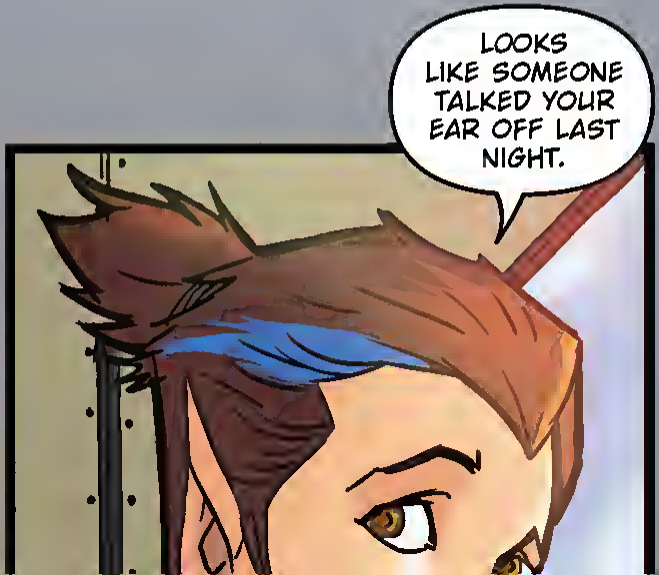
I WAS TRAPPED IN THE SNOW ABOVE THE CASTLE OF COUNT NECARISS. ANYONE WHO KNOWS THE COUNT KNOWS HIS WIFE HATED HIM, SO IT WAS NOT ENTIRELY UNEXPECTED THAT SHE WOULD BE CHARMED

BY MY WIT AND REPUTATION.
THE COUNT DIDN'T APPRECIATE HER TAKING A LIKING TO ME SO HE DEMANDED WE BATTLE IN OUR PRIMAL FORMS. WHICH MADE ME CHUCKLE ON THE INSIDE. A SNOW TIGER-MAN VERSUS A DRACONUS OF SUCH LINEAGE AS MYSELF.


ABSURD, REALLY.
I DON'T MIND SAYING
THAT I'M NOT AGAINST
AN UNFAIR FIGHT BUT
THIS WAS

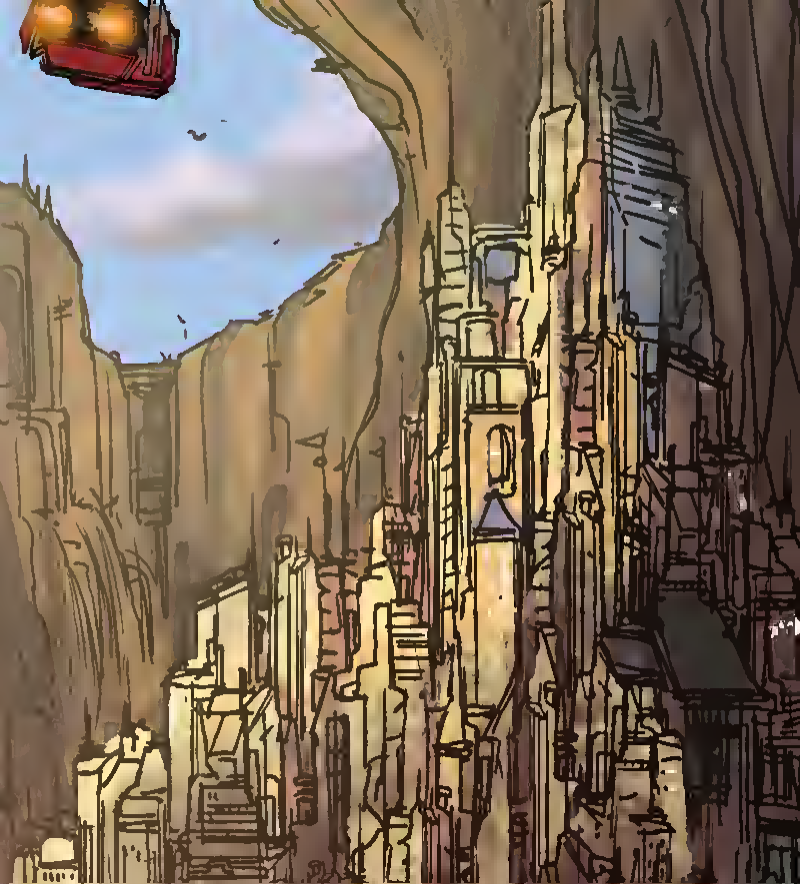

THIS WAS...


ARE WE THERE YET?
GOOD MORNING... OR SHOULD I SAY AFTERNOON. WE'RE ALMOST THERE.


LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE TALKED YOUR EAR OFF LAST NIGHT.

YEAH. I NOW KNOW MORE ABOUT FOUR ARMED PRINCESSES THAN I WOULD EVER WANT OR NEED TO.

WHOA!
LOOK!



WELCOME TO SCA'VE.

NEXT EPISODE: WAR STORIES